IV. ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPED

The primary objective of the ADG was to create alternatives for the study area. These alternatives and the analysis of the alternatives are presented in the "alternatives" section of the Corps EIS. This section describes how the ADG proceeded in creating the alternatives. A map with a brief description of key features of each alternative is provided in Appendix C.

The ADG examined the study area in four subareas, or "zooms," as shown in Figure IV-1. The ADG first created alternatives for Zoom B, also referred to as the "hub." This term "hub" was brought into the process by the Corps to demonstrate the notion that this area, roughly the Estero Imperial Integrated Watershed boundary, was the central analytical focus of the EIS. This was not to suggest that the other portions of the study area would not be addressed by the ADG. The remaining areas were examined in the following sequence: C, D, and A.

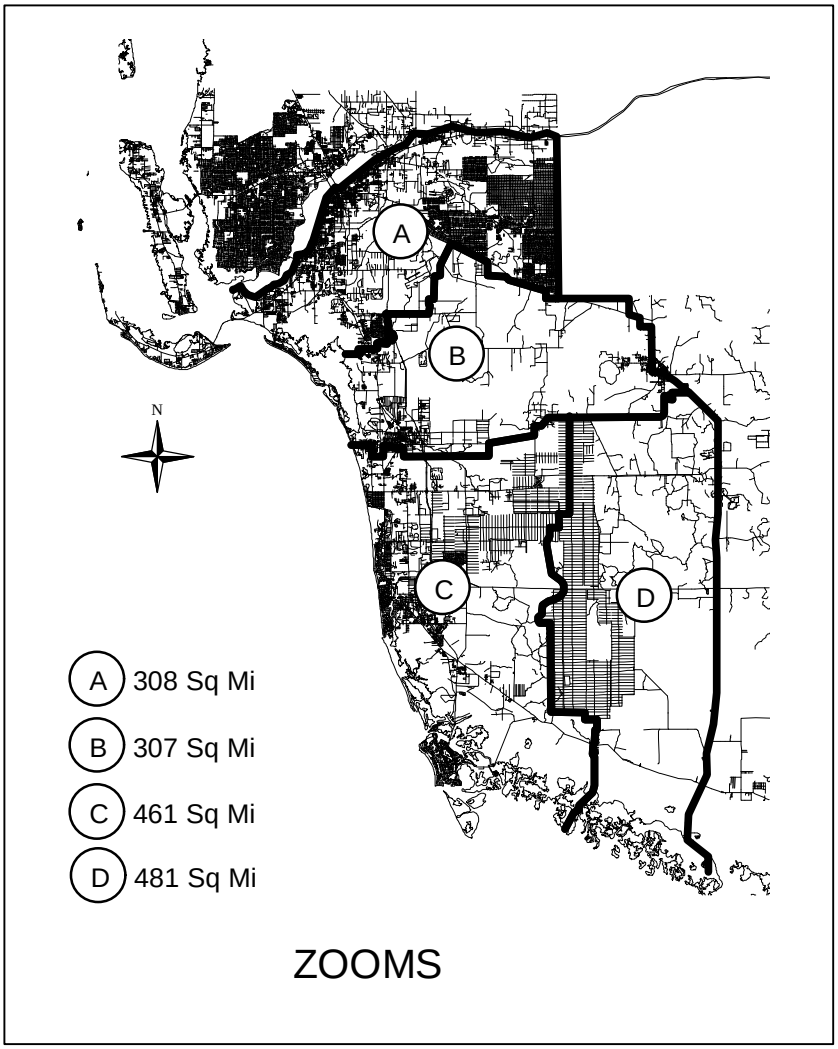

FIGURE IV-1

PROSPECTIVE ZOOMS

An existing alternative for each of the four zooms was the respective county comprehensive plan(s). The comprehensive plans were provided to the ADG as the preferred alternatives by the participating county governments and Florida's Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The comprehensive plans were some of many alternatives evaluated by the ADG. The comprehensive plans were created using a planning process that received a great deal of input from the public on a wide range of issues. Thus, the future land use maps of comprehensive plans are accompanied by detailed documentation that supports certain features presented graphically.

Additional alternatives for each zoom were created by dividing the ADG membership into four subgroups tasked with developing up to two alternatives for each area. The alternatives were to be created recognizing the range of issues described in Chapter III. The groups were formed randomly, with the objective of getting members representing a variety of interests in each subgroup. Likewise, the alternatives created by each subgroup would represent a range of interests. However, the way the process actually unfolded, some of the subgroups were dominated by particular interests, which resulted in alternatives that were more indicative of particular interests. In the end though, given the input of the different subgroups, the ADG had an adequate range of alternatives to evaluate for each zoom.

These alternatives were presented on maps where land use and hydrologic features and enhancements were shown. Many alternatives were supported with conditions and criteria that described land use designations. The alternatives were created by drawing features on maps, using different shading to represent selected aspects. Each alternative was presented to the ADG by the subgroup that authored the alternative. It should be noted that while appropriate for the level of analysis being conducted by the ADG, the resolution of some of the alternatives drawings varied in precision because of scale, tools used, and transfer of data to the GIS. The precise location of the lines drawn should be interpreted cautiously. Also, some existing land use features (e.g., existing rock mines) were not depicted on the maps.

Typically, descriptions of land features accompanied the alternatives maps. Early on, during the alternatives development phase of the process, many representatives of environmental interests collaborated on a set of permit conditions that was used to further elaborate standards and strategies deemed critical to the environmental perspective. Other sets of criteria were developed for certain areas such as Lehigh Acres and Golden Gate Estates. Both the land use configurations depicted on the alternative maps and associated narratives were considered in the evaluation of the alternatives. The evaluation of the alternatives is presented in Chapter V and Chapter VII.